



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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### **Construction Begins on SH 161 After TxDOT, NTTA Agree on Negotiated Value**

Plano – Construction will begin today on State Highway 161 along several portions of the right-of-way as a result of an agreement reached this weekend.

On Sunday, April 20, 2008, The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) officially agreed on a negotiated value of \$458 million for State Highway 161, that includes reimbursement to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) for construction of segments 2 and 3 and the remainder will be an upfront payment to be utilized on transportation projects throughout the region. The NTTA will also pay to construct segment 4 which is estimated to cost \$610 million.

The action taken by the NTTA is not an official offer to develop SH 161. The agreement allows construction to begin and ensures that the road will be built as a toll road. Official acceptance of the project by the NTTA is dependent on an investment grade traffic and revenue report, rating confirmations on the NTTA's bonds and further financial analysis as well as approval by its Board of Directors.

"Yesterday's agreement between NTTA and TxDOT is another milestone that benefits the drivers of the North Texas region," said Bill Hale, district engineer for the Dallas district of TxDOT. "As a result of the cooperation between TxDOT, the NTTA and the RTC, the North Texas region will benefit for decades to come."

Upon acceptance, SH 161 will be owned and operated by the NTTA in perpetuity. Beginning in year 53, the NTTA will share with TxDOT 50 percent of SH 161 revenues, minus operating and maintenance costs as well rehabilitation and reconstruction. The NTTA and TxDOT will also share the costs of all capital improvements beginning in year 53.

"The agreement reached yesterday provides significant value to the citizens of North Texas and the NTTA System. As a natural extension of the President George Bush Turnpike, SH 161 will provide improved mobility in Dallas and Tarrant counties," said Paul N. Wageman, Chairman of the NTTA Board of Directors. "I want to especially thank Lt. Governor David Dewhurst and Texas Senators John Carona, Florence Shapiro and Chris Harris who supported a timely resolution of the SH 161 market valuation."

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NTTA has indicated it will either accept or waive its rights to SH 161 by this summer. If the NTTA does not acquire SH 161, TxDOT can pursue a Comprehensive Development Agreement.

“I would like to commend all parties that have been involved in this negotiation. We are proceeding with a project that has been in our plans for decades. Our focus in 2008 is to get projects built,” said Michael Morris, director of transportation for the North Central Texas Council of Governments. “This is a fine example of the team work that it will take to meet the region’s transportation needs.”

SH 161 will run from SH 183 to Interstate Highway 20. The roadway will be complete to IH 30 by August 2009.

***About the Texas Department of Transportation***

The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining nearly 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, rail and public transportation across the state. TxDOT and its 15,000 employees strive to empower local leaders to solve local transportation problems, and to use new financial tools, including tolling and public-private partnerships, to reduce congestion and pave the way for future economic growth while enhancing safety, improving air quality and increasing the value of the state’s transportation assets. Find out more at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov).

***About the NTTA***

The North Texas Tollway Authority, a political subdivision of the state of Texas, is authorized to acquire, construct, maintain, repair and operate turnpike projects in the North Texas region. The nine-member governing board is comprised of Chairman Paul N. Wageman; Vice Chairman William W. Meadows; and Directors Gary Base, Bob Day, David Denison, Michael Nowels, Bob Shepard, Alan E. Sims and Victor Vandergriff.

The NTTA serves Collin, Dallas, Denton and Tarrant counties and is responsible for the NTTA System, consisting of the Dallas North Tollway, President George Bush Turnpike, Addison Airport Toll Tunnel, Lewisville Lake Toll Bridge and the Mountain Creek Lake Bridge. The NTTA is able to raise capital for construction projects through the issuance of turnpike revenue bonds. NTTA toll projects are not a part of the state highway system and receive no direct tax funding. Tolls are collected to repay debt and to operate and maintain the roadways.

Visit the NTTA Web site at [www.ntta.org](http://www.ntta.org) or call 214-461-2000 for additional information about the NTTA. For Customer Service, please call 972-818-NTTA (6882).